

AVANTI

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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AVANTI : FAQ

Q: [Can the applicant submit several synopsis or only one? \(for directors\)](#)

A: You are allowed to submit several projects but bear in mind that proposing too many projects will suggest to the jury that you don't know which one you really want to do!

Q: [Is there any special format to present a budget? \(for producers and fiction directors\)](#)

A: No. The best presentation is to make a precise list of all costs with the estimated amount in US dollars for each category.

Q: [What should include a letter of motivation? \(for all candidates\)](#)

A: It is a personal statement from the candidate about his commitment towards the South Caucasus film industry : why does he want to make films, how does he see the future in the region for film & TV, the hopes and difficulties ? It should also tell the jury about the importance of his project : why must this film be made ? (Remember that nationalistic content will be excluded from the selection!)

Q: [The movies \(documentary, short and long-feature films\) at the end of training should be shot in digital video or on film? \(for producers and fiction directors\)](#)

A: This doesn't depend on AVANTI but on each individual participant, according to the money available to him and his artistic choices. AVANTI has no responsibility in making the films, it is only training participants and supporting financially some of their films. However, considering the few financial resources available in South Caucasus, a strong emphasis on digital video transferred on 35mm will be proposed.

Q: [About the format of the films: 35mm or Digital Video. Which format is supposed to be preferable? And what do you mean by "Digital Video transferred to 35 mm"? And which format from Digital Video is appropriate? For instance, we are used to shoot in DVCAM.](#)

A: As you know for low budget you can use DVCAM and get it transferred onto 35 mm to have at the end a film in 35mm for cinemas. This "kinescoping" technique may help to reduce production costs, depending on the project. Projects should be in the format that the director thinks is the best for his film, taking into account low budget necessity...

Q: [If somebody decides to apply as a producer does that mean that afterwards, he should be grouped with a director and cannot produce his film as a producer-director at the same time? \(for producers\)](#)

A: Producer apply as persons, which means without a film project. If they wish to produce a specific film, then they should encourage a director to apply in GROUP B, with whom they will "officially" team up from the end of Session I. But it must clear that AVANTI is not a program for writer-director-producers. It is a program for producers (GROUP A) **OR** directors (GROUP B).

Q: [Is language the main concern and limiting fact for further participation? \(for fiction directors\)](#)

A: English should not be a limitation for the feature film group, because classes will be held in English AND in Russian, with translation. Only the applications must be submitted in English. For the directors of the short film series, a fair level of English still remains a requirement.

Q: What does it mean: "18 directors (also writers of their OWN project)" in practice? (for fiction directors)

A: It means that AVANTI is training directors that are also writing or co-writing their own films. It is not a program for directors who don't have a project or don't want to write a single line on it.

Q: Is it possible for a director to be the producer of his own films? (for fiction directors)

A: In AVANTI, we aim to train producers to produce different films, to develop their companies and work with different directors. AVANTI is not a program for directors who want to produce their own films because they cannot attend the 2 classes at the same time and because it is not a good investment for AVANTI to teach producing to a director who only produces his own films.

Q: Can the candidate bring his own interpreter at their own expenses? (for producers and fiction directors)

A: For Producers (GROUP A), English is an absolute requirement. It makes no sense to train somebody to be a producer if they are not autonomous in English because they will not be able to work afterwards. So the answer is NO.

For short film directors (GROUP C), an additional interpreter is a possibility. This situation will be discussed if the candidate is selected, so it should not be a reason not to apply to AVANTI.

Q: What does it mean "the project may have co-writers"? (for fiction directors)

A: No writing is done during the sessions so there can be a co-writer who writes the script between the sessions, but for AVANTI, the person who represents the project artistically is the director.

Q: What does it mean "research and documents"? (for documentary directors)

A: It means that, depending on the kind of documentary project, the candidate must present some research (background information from books, newspapers, pictures, etc.) on his subject. The jury must be able to assess the reality beyond the documentary project to understand the point of view, the originality and pertinence of the project.

Q: What's FOCAL's business? (for all candidates)

A: FOCAL is a non-profit foundation set up to run the continuing education in film and audiovisual media in Switzerland. It runs workshops for the whole chain : from projectionists to directors, including digital techniques and scriptwriting. Because FOCAL has 12 years of experience in setting up programs in film training, the Swiss Development Agency has asked FOCAL to create a program for the specific needs of South Caucasus.

Q: Is AVANTI involved with the respective Ministries of Culture and the professional associations? (for all candidates)

A: AVANTI is under the strict guidance of FOCAL and SDC. Contacts with all film organizations, public or private, have been established but are not formal. The juries and experts of AVANTI are independent and most of them are not from South Caucasus.

Q: As a lawyer interested in your program, I am afraid that my English is not good enough. (for lawyers)

A: A glossary of the main legal terms will be given to all selected lawyers.

Q: As I understood directors (Group B) should apply with film project with approximate budget US\$ 100 000 to 250 000. But in case of successful selection, the film project will be granted US\$ 50 000 only. Does it mean that the director (or producer) should get the rest of money from other sources?

A: Absolutely. The funding of the film will request different sources of finance. AVANTI will try to train producers to find the missing money, but to finance completely the project will be the producer's job and responsibility.

Q: If the film project will be granted (partly?) by SDC, who will have the copyright for the final product?

A: The producers. AVANTI and SDC are not asking for any rights.

Q: Group C - Directors / Short Film Series: Do 3 pages of synopsis include a short artistic statement and estimated budget or 3 pages can be dedicated to synopsis and budget and a short artistic statement can be provided on a separate sheet?

A: For the category "short films", you can add one more page for artistic statement to your three-pages synopsis. You can add one separate page for budget as well.

Q: Group C - Directors / Short Film Series: Should be the budget restricted to \$10'000 or proposals can exceed \$10'000 with referring to the other sources of financial support?

A: Of course your budget can exceed \$10'000, especially if you have ideas of where to

look for additional sources... Just be aware that it remains difficult to finance short films and it is probably best to think of a low budget production design. But if your project requires more money on artistic grounds, you can explain it in your application.

AVANTI : ASK A QUESTION

If you have any question about AVANTI program, please [send us an email](mailto:webmaster@focal.ch) :
webmaster@focal.ch

We will reply to you by email and display your question and it's answer on this page.

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